

Alton VFW preparing for big day May 20 with vendor bazaar and concert

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
May 16 2017 5:21 AM



ALTON - Under the new directorship of Tom Wilson, Alton VFW Post #1308 is going to be more involved with the community and inviting to younger veterans.

One of those methods is through an upcoming eventful day at the VFW, which is located at 4445 N. Alby, which will begin with a vendor bazaar from 1-4 p.m. Wilson said the bazaar will feature as many as 20 vendors, each bringing something different to the mix. It will be hosted in the ballroom, and patrons may peruse various local businesses selling assorted items - some of which are edible.

"We have some gourmet popcorn and everything," volunteer Pat O'Dell Brown said. "No two vendors are alike."

Food, such as sloppy Joes, chips and salads will also be offered for sale to benefit the VFW.

That night, from 6-9 p.m. the Pat Holt USO singers will be performing in the hall. Wilson said the singers croon songs from several eras of United States military history - from World War II until the present day. Tickets for that show are \$15 in advance, and can be purchased from the VFW's canteen area (the bar) or \$20 at the door on the day of show.

Another event for children is the presentation of the CID awards. In this case, CID is an acronym for "courage, integrity and determination." Those awards will be presented to children with terminal illnesses or chronic conditions - such as cancer, autism or another physical or emotional condition.

Each of the children involved in the presentation were given a medal and a special ID card from the VFW. Wilson said he hopes the event can be a nationally-held ceremony in VFWs across the country.

"We want these children to know they are not alone in their fights," Wilson said. "We want them to know people outside of their immediate family care about them and are there for them."

Children from across the St. Louis Metro Area are welcome to be a part of the VFW's CID awards. This session will feature nine awards presented to children.

Hopefully, Wilson said, the renewed efforts of the Alton VFW Post #1308 to serve veterans of all eras as well as the community will show the VFW is not simply a place for veterans to gather, eat food and drink all day. He said even more community engagement, including more events featuring its ritual team will occur in the near future.